

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 NEA-07 SP-02 L-01 EB-03

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R 160515Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1882

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NIARABI

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 5069

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, SO, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESENCE IN SOMALIA

REF: A. STATE 162533 & PREVIOUS

B. JIDDA 4537

C. JIDDA 4410

D. JIDDA 3577

1. IN A JULY 14 MEETING WITH SAUDI MINSTATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS PRINCE SAUD AL FAISAL THE AMBASSADOR RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE SOVIET PRESENCE AT BERBERA. HE SAID THAT THE VISIT OF SENATOR BARTLETT HAD LEFT ABSOLUTELY NO DOUBT THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE A MAJOR MILITARY FACILITY FOR THEIR SOLE USE AT BERBERA. HE NOTED THAT SENATOR BARTLETT'S INTEGRITY IS WELL KNOWN TO THE SAUDIS AND THAT HIS CONCLUSIONS WERE BACKED UP BY MILITARY EXPERTS ACCOMPANYING HIM.

2. PRINCE SAUD SAID HE HAD HEARD OF THE RESULTS OF
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SENATOR BARTLETT'S VISIT. HE INQUIRED ONCE AGAIN HOW

SERIOUS A PROBLEM THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN BERBERA WAS TO THE U.S. AND WHAT THE U.S. WAS PREPARED TO DO TO SEE THE SOVIETS REMOVED. THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT WE REGARDED THE SOVIET PRESENCE AS A SERIOUS MATTER, AND THE SAG SHOULD REGARD IT EVEN MORE SO; AS TO PRINCE SAUD'S PREVIOUS REQUEST ABOUT U.S. WILLINGNESS TO MAKE SAUDI-FINANCED MILITARY SALES TO SOMALIA, HE SAID THIS IS A DELICATE ISSUE AFFECTING U.S. RELATIONS WITH BOTH ETHIOPIA AND KENYA SINCE SOMALIA HAS CLAIMS AGAINST THE TERRITORY OF BOTH. HE SAID HE THEREFORE THOUGHT IT UNLIKELY THAT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE AN EARLY POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THIS QUESTION.

3. PRINCE SAUD THEN INQUIRED WHETHER THE U.S. IS PREPARED TO GIVE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA. HE SAID THAT SOVIET AID, LARGELY FOR DROUGHT ASSISTANCE, AMOUNTS TO APPROXIMATELY \$60 MILLION. IF IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE U.S.--AS IT IS TO SAUDI ARABIA--TO GET THE SOVIETS OUT OF SOMALIA WOULD THE U.S. BE WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH THE SAG TO REPLACE THE SOVIETS AS AID DONORS? SPECIFICALLY, IF SAUDI ARABIA WERE WILLING TO PUT UP \$30 MILLION IN ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA WOULD THE U.S. BE WILLING TO MATCH THE DONATION.

4. COMMENT. THE SAG CLEARLY WANTS TO DO SOMETHING TO GET THE SOVIETS OUT OF SOMALIA, BUT ONLY SEEMS WILLING TO MOVE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE U.S., PERHAPS AS A SIGN OF U.S. COMMITMENT TO THE ENDEAVOR.

5. ACTION REQUESTED. A RESPONSE TO PRINCE SAUD'S QUERY WHETHER THE U.S. IS WILLING TO JOIN SAUDI ARABIA IN A PROGRAM OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA.

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